

CLAY



In the mid 1950's, a group of California artists began to disassociate themselves from prevalent attitudes toward the centuries-old ceramic tradition. The CLAY exhibition represents some of the various innovations and directions which began during that period. The traditional approach to clay forms, derived from Oriental concerns and practices, emphasizes the psychological wholeness and physical interrelatedness of surface, form, and function. Two deviations from this tradition began to interest younger artists working in clay: first, that the utility of the vessel itself was no longer a prerequisite for its validity, and second, that clay could be used to create a major art form.

The art climate in California was particularly conducive for the clay revolution. The Far East has had a strong influence upon ceramic art of the West Coast, and educational programs were geared toward

a continuation of that long-standing craft tradition. In addition, California artists were physically and psychically removed from the New York-centered art world and its preoccupation with painting and sculpture as fine art. A less formal life-style encouraged a new kind of personal and artistic freedom to flourish. There existed a willingness in a younger group of artist-educators, who were filling new positions in the expanding California colleges and universities, to explore differing approaches in clay, and to support experimental work of students. This has resulted in the phenomenon of a university-perpetuated clay movement, with the majority of contemporary ceramicists being university trained.

Peter Voulkos initiated the widespread reconsideration of the possibilities in ceramic art forms in Los Angeles in 1954. His rejection of the conventional belief that a pot must serve as a vessel

allowed for varied and innovative uses of clay. By squashing and disfiguring hand-built and wheel-thrown forms, he de-emphasized symmetry and balance, and allowed raw, broken edges and disruptive angles to appear. RED RIVER (1960) reflects his involvement with the essential characteristics of the medium: its fluidity, texture, and organic quality. His work has been described as a counterpart to the abstract expressionist painting being done concurrently in New York, in that they both revealed a direct interaction of the artist and the medium, with emphasis on the resultant brushwork and physical manipulation of materials.

Because ceramic artists were no longer limited to shapes required by functional vessels, clay could be used in purely sculptural formations. Kenneth Price, a colleague of Peter Voulkos, began exploring biomorphic pod-like shapes, such as S.L. GREEN (1963), and was one of the first artists to forsake glazes for industrial paints of intense color. Price was also involved with the concept of the traditional cup form, but visually questioned the function of its elements through the illogical use of frogs, lizards, and turtles as

handles and bases. His BLIND SEA TURTLE CUP (1968) gives the suggestion of utility while confronting the potential user with the distraction of a weighty turtle at the bottom of the cup. It also is a pun on the Indian creation myth that depicts the world formed on the back of an eternal turtle. These conceptual references to the intended function of a vessel are characteristic of many contemporary ceramic works by Voulkos, Price, Arneson, Hudson, and Shaw.

In their quest to create exciting, vital, and technically refined art works from clay, these artists utilized materials and techniques which were not considered appropriate to the art and craft of handmade pottery: glazes and metallic lusters fired at a low temperature which produce bright colors unobtainable from high fire glazes; decals, lettering, and stamped impressions reminiscent of souvenir and dime-store items; and the casting of delicate porcelain objects from molds.

In addition to this concern with process and technique, a number of ceramic pieces utilize humorous, erotic, and bizarre imagery. Robert Arneson has

explored common or popular objects such as his SIX-PACK (1964) and BRICKS (1968). TEAPOT (1969), with its phallic spout, is an example of the visual puns which pervade and enhance his work. But while Arneson's humorous sexual metaphor remains a functional teapot, Clayton Bailey's whimsically titled USELESS TEAPOT (1968) manifests contemporary ceramics' desire to escape practicality. In contrast to these two earthenware teapots is the fragile, delicate cast porcelain teapot by Jack Earl, MY GIRL IS A NICE GIRL (1970). Earl's pieces possess a classical grace that is unique, and his specific use of porcelain is especially appropriate in this context.

David Gilhooly manipulates clay into sculptural forms which illustrate episodes of history in a frog civilization. There is the FROG VISITS PARIS CUP (1968), the FROG MOUNTIE COOKIE JAR (1973), and a mysterious Egyptian frog diety MOTHER-IN-LAW MUMMY OF THE NEROIC PERIOD (1972). Gilhooly presents us with a parallel civilization to our own by which we might obtain a new perspective on society. On the other hand, William Wilhelmi employs gargoyle-like monsters to

depict familiar members of our culture in his THE FLYING WALLENDAS (1973).

The use of clay as a sculptural medium is further expanded by Marilyn Levine in her realistic depictions of boots, shoes, and KNAPSACK (1970). The natural qualities of clay have been exploited in order to make it resemble materials very different from itself in weight, composition, and flexibility, but strikingly exact in its texture, malleability, and color. The physical characteristics of clay lend themselves to transformations which convincingly suggest leather and cardboard, such as the ceramic wall pieces of Robert Rauschenberg.

Cast porcelain objects of common, familiar items like rocks, twigs, fish, and hatchets, are incorporated into cup and bottle forms to create a sculptural form that visually interferes with the intended function of the piece. Richard Shaw and Robert Hudson have assembled these objects in surreal juxtapositions which draw attention to their enigmatic qualities. Both Hudson and Shaw integrate into the surface of their pieces detailed painting which



Kenneth Price, *S. L. GREEN* (1963).

expands the dimensions and visual force of the work.

This exhibition presents examples of contemporary clay objects that are not widely known or exhibited. The ability of these artists to exploit the inherent potential and adaptability of clay with the whole range of ceramic techniques, and to evoke humorous and surrealist overtones, has infused an ancient art with peculiarly contemporary qualities.



Peter Voulkos, *RED RIVER* (1960).



Clayton Bailey, *USELESS TEAPOT* (1968).



Robert Arneson, *TEAPOT* (1969).



Richard Shaw, *CUP* (1972).



Jack Earl, *MY GIRL IS A NICE GIRL* (1970).



Robert Rauschenberg, *TAMPA CLAY PIECE 4* (1972).



William Wilhelmi, *THE FLYING WALLENDAS* (1973).



Marilyn Levine, *KNAPSACK* (1970). David Gilhooly, *MOTHER-IN-LAW MUMMY OF THE NEROIC PERIOD* (1972).

CATALOGUE

All dimensions are given in inches;
height precedes width precedes depth.

JIM AQAMSON

Born Wichita, Kansas, 1939.
B.A., San Jose State College, 1964;
M.A., University of California, Davis, 1966.
Teaches Sierra College, Rocklin, California.
Resides Loomis, California.

1. LANDSCAPE CUP AND SAUCER-CACTUS, 1972
Earthenware, 4½x12x6.
Lent by the artist.
2. ENDANGERED ART WORKS BOX-PEREGRINE,
PT. REYES, CALIFORNIA, 1973
Earthenware, 7½x8½x4½.
Lent by the artist.
3. ANCIENT ART WORKS-ENCASED MUMMIES, 1973
Earthenware, wood, plastic, 8x11½x9.
Lent by the artist.

ROBERT ARNESON

Born Benicla, California, 1930.
B.A., California College of Arts and Crafts, 1954;
M.F.A., Mills College, 1958.
Teaches University of California, Davis.
Resides Davis, California.

4. SIX-PACK, 1964
Ceramic
Lent by Allan Stone Gallery, New York.
5. BRICKS, 1968
Ceramic
Lent by Allan Stone Gallery, New York.
6. TEAPOT, 1969
Ceramic
Lent by Allan Stone Gallery, New York.
7. TEAPOT, 1969
Ceramic
Lent by Allan Stone Gallery, New York.
8. CRISCO, 1965
Ceramic
Lent by Allan Stone Gallery, New York.

CLAYTON BAILEY

Born Antigo, Wisconsin, 1939.
B.S., 1961; M.S., 1962, University of Wisconsin.
Teaches California State College, Hayward.
Resides Crockett, California.

9. PITCHER NO. 39, 1968
Ceramic whiteware, luster.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc.,
New York.
10. CAMOUFLAGE CRITTER TEAPOT, 1968
Ceramic
Lent by Quane Zaloudek, New York.
11. USELESS TEAPOT, 1968
Ceramic, artificial Inoleum glaze.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc.

12. SPOTTEO NOSE CUP WITH GLASS EYE, 1968
Ceramic
Lent by Quane Zaloudek, New York.

FRED BAUER

Born Memphis, Tennessee, 1937.
B.F.A., Memphis Academy of Art, 1962;
M.F.A., University of Washington, 1964.
Resides Oakland, California.

13. MEAL, 1969
Ceramic, 18x14½x3½.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc., New York.

KAREN BRESCHI

Born 1941.
B.F.A., California College of Arts and Crafts, 1963;
M.A., San Francisco State College, 1965.
Teaches San Francisco Art Institute.
Resides San Francisco, California.

14. MOTHER CAT, 1972
Ceramic, fur, acrylic paint, 20x17x13.
Lent by Allan Frumkin Gallery, New York.
15. PIG BOSS, 1973
Ceramic, acrylic paint, glitter, 24x24x12.
Lent by Allan Frumkin, New York.

VICTOR Cicansky

Born Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, 1935.
B.A., University of Saskatchewan, 1967;
M.F.A., University of California, Davis, 1970.
Resides Saskatchewan, Canada.

16. CHAIRS, 1968
Ceramic
Lent by Allan Stone Gallery, New York.

JACK EARL

Born Unipolis, Ohio, 1934.
B.A., Bluffton College, Ohio, 1956;
M.A., Ohio State University, 1964.
Teaches Virginia Commonwealth University.
Resides Charles City, Virginia.

17. MY GIRL IS A NICE GIRL, 1970
Porcelain
Lent by Buntly and Tom Armstrong, New York.
18. CELLAR, 1972
Porcelain, 8½x7½x5.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc., New York.
19. GIRL ON A CHAIR, 1973
Porcelain, 9½x2½x2.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc., New York.
20. DOG IN TROUBLE, 1974
Porcelain, 2x5½x1.
Lent by the artist.
21. DOG IN TROUBLE, 1974
Porcelain, 2½x4½x2.
Lent by the artist.

DAVID FURMAN

Born Seattle, Washington, 1947.
B.A., University of Oregon, 1969;
M.F.A., University of Washington, 1972.
Teaches Pitzer College, California.
Resides Claremont, California.

22. JIM'S LIVING ROOM, 1970
Ceramic, 7x14x14.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc.
23. AMERICAN ART ROOM, 1972
Ceramic, 6½x7½x9.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc.
24. EARTH ROOM, 1972
Ceramic, 6½x11½x9½.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc.
25. SURREALIST ART ROOM, 1972
Ceramic, 6½x12½x10.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc.

DAVID GILHOOLY

Born Auburn, California, 1943.
B.A., 1965; M.A., 1967, University of
California, Davis.
Teaches York University, Toronto, Canada.
Resides Toronto, Canada.

26. SELF PORTRAIT CUP, 1968
Ceramic, 4x5.
Private Collection, New York.
27. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING FROG CUP, 1968
Ceramic, 3½x5.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc.
28. FROG VISITS PARIS CUP, 1968
Ceramic, 3½x5.
Lent by Jane Kleinberg, New York.
29. THE GREAT WHITE HOPE-YORKSHIRE
CHAMPION BOAR, 1970-71
Ceramic, 10x19x40.
Lent by Robert Feldman, New York.
30. MIRACLE OF PRODUCTION, 1972
Ceramic, 24x17x32.
Lent by David Bourdon, New York.
31. MOTHER-IN-LAW MUMMY OF THE MERODIC PERIOD,
1972, Earthenware, 9x33x17.
Lent by Allan Frumkin Gallery, New York.
32. OONUTS, 1973
Ceramic
Lent by Robert Feldman, New York.
33. FROG MOUNTIE COOKIE JAR, 1973
Ceramic, 9x13x13.
Lent by Robert Feldman, New York.
34. CYCLE OF LIFE OSIRIS, 1973
Stoneware
Lent by The Museum of Mott Art, Inc.,
New York.

ERIK GRONBORG

Born Copenhagen, Denmark, 1931.
B.A., 1962; M.A., 1963, University of California,
Berkeley. Teaches University of Nevada.
Resides Las Vegas, Nevada.

35. PLATE NO. 5, 1970
Ceramic, 1½x9 diameter.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc.
36. PLATE NO. 10, 1970
Ceramic, 2x14½ diameter.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc.
37. CUP NO. 2, 1970
Ceramic, 4x2½.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc.
38. CUP NO. 6, 1970
Ceramic, 6½x3½.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc.

ROBERT HUOSON

Born Salt Lake City, Utah, 1938.
B.F.A., 1962; M.F.A., 1963, San Francisco
Art Institute.
Teaches University of California, Berkeley.
Resides Stinson Beach, California.

39. COME BOTTLE WITH DEER HOOF TOP, 1973
Porcelain, 16x9½x9½.
Lent by Hansen Fuller Gallery,
San Francisco, California.
40. STARS AND STICKS TEAPOT, 1973
Porcelain, 12x12x9.
Lent by Hansen Fuller Gallery,
San Francisco, California.

HOWARD KOTTLER

Born Cleveland, Ohio, 1930.
B.A., 1952; M.A., 1956; Ph.D., 1964, Ohio State
University. M.F.A., 1957, Cranbrook Academy of Art.
Teaches University of Washington, Seattle.
Resides Seattle, Washington.

41. PLATES, 1973
 - a. WASH OAY MIRACLE
 - b. EXHAUSTED GLORY
 - c. HOLLOW DREAM
 - d. CHARMING LYRECeramic, decalcamania, luster.
Lent by Helen Orutt Gallery, Philadelphia.
42. PLATES, 1973
 - a. SILENT WHITE MAJORITY
 - b. LOOK ALIKES
 - c. AMERICAN MINSTRELCeramic, decalcamania, leather, wood.
Lent by Helen Orutt Gallery, Philadelphia.

MARILYN LEVINE

Born Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada, 1935.
B.S., 1957; M.S., 1959, University of Alberta.
M.A., 1970, University of California, Berkeley.
Teaches University of Utah, Salt Lake City.
Resides Salt Lake City, Utah.

43. BROWN BOOTS, 1972
Stoneware, leather laces, each 6½x12x5.
Lent by Daniel and Joanna Rose, New York.
44. DONALD'S COWBOY BOOTS, 1972
Stoneware, 12x11½x5 and 11½x11½x6½.
Lent by Daniel and Joanna Rose, New York.
45. KNAPSACK, 1970
Stoneware, 15x19x15.
Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence B. Karter,
New York.
46. BLACK DOCTOR'S BAG, 1972
Stoneware, 9x18x9.
Lent by Dr. and Mrs. Howard Berk,
New York.
47. SOCKS, 1971
Stoneware
Lent by Patterson Sims and Orayton Grant,
New York.

RICHARD NOTKIN

Born Chicago, Illinois, 1948.
B.F.A., Kansas City Art Institute, 1971;
M.F.A., University of California, Davis, 1973.
Resides Davis, California.

48. THE HUMAN CANNONBALL, 1972
Ceramic, string.
Lent by The Museum of Mott Art, Inc.,
New York.
49. ALPHABET SOUP, 1973
Ceramic, glass, walnut, 14x12 diameter.
Lent by The Museum of Mott Art, Inc.,
New York.
50. UNTITLED, 1973
Ceramic, glass, walnut, 13x9 diameter.
Lent by The Museum of Mott Art, Inc.,
New York.

KENNETH PRICE

Born Los Angeles, California, 1935.
B.F.A., University of Southern California, 1957;
M.F.A., Alfred University, New York, 1959.
Resides Los Angeles, California.

51. S.L. GREEN, 1963
Ceramic, paint, 9½x10½x10½.
Whitney Museum of American Art. Gift of
The Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc.
52. BLIND SEA TURTLE CUP, 1968
Ceramic, sand.
Lent by Charles Cowles and
The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
53. CUP, 1968
Ceramic, yellow glazes, 2½x5x3.
Lent by Charles Cowles, New York.

54. FROG CUP, 1968
Lithograph, 25x19½.
Lent by Brooke Alexander, Inc., New York.

55. LIZARD CUP, 1971
Silkscreen, 30x40.
Lent by Brooke Alexander, Inc., New York.
56. CHAIRS, TABLE, RUG, CUP, 1971
Silkscreen, 51½x41½.
Lent by Martha Jackson Gallery, New York.
57. COFFEE SHOP AT THE CHICAGO ART INSTITUTE, 1971
Silkscreen, 40x60.
Lent by Martha Jackson Gallery, New York.

ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG

Born Port Arthur, Texas, 1925.
Educated Black Mountain College, North Carolina;
Art Students League, New York.
Resides New York, New York.

58. TAMPA CLAY PIECE 1, 1972
Clay, silkscreen decals, soil patina,
12½x15½x3½.
Lent by the artist.
59. TAMPA CLAY PIECE 2, 1972
Clay, silkscreen decals, soil patina,
15½x23½x1.
Lent by the artist.
60. TAMPA CLAY PIECE 3, 1972
Clay, silkscreen decals, soil patina,
hand painted staples, 19½x24½x5½.
Lent by the artist.
61. TAMPA CLAY PIECE 4, 1972
Clay, silkscreen decals, hand painted
staples, 19½x17x1½.
Lent by the artist.

JACQUELYN RICE

Born Orange, California, 1941.
B.F.A., 1969; M.F.A., 1970, University of Washington.
Teaches University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
Resides Ann Arbor, Michigan.

62. LITTLE HELPER, 1973
Raku ceramic.
Lent by the artist.
63. CUPS, 1974
Porcelain, lusters.
Lent by Helen Orutt Gallery, Philadelphia.

RICHARD SHAW

Born Hollywood, California, 1941.
B.F.A., San Francisco Art Institute, 1965;
Alfred University, New York, 1965; M.A., University
of California, Davis, 1968.
Teaches San Francisco Art Institute.
Resides Stinson Beach, California.

64. CUP, 1972
Porcelain, 12x9x6½.
Lent by Helen Orutt Gallery, Philadelphia and
Quay Gallery, San Francisco, California.

65. JUG, 1972
Porcelain
Lent by Helen Orutt Gallery, Philadelphia and
Quay Gallery, San Francisco, California.

BILL STEWART

Born Plattsburg, New York, 1941.
B.S., State University College, Buffalo, 1963;
M.F.A., Ohio State University, 1966.
Teaches State University College, Brockport.
Resides Hamlin, New York.

66. BO PEEP'S DUCK MOUSE, 1971
Porcelain
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc., New York.
67. CAMEL PLATE, 1972
Ceramic
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc., New York.

LIZBETH STEWART

Born 1948.
B.F.A., Moore College of Art, Philadelphia, 1971.
Resides Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

68. HOTH AIRPLANE, 1974
Porcelain, 6x21½x12½.
Lent by Helen Orutt Gallery, Philadelphia.

ANN STOCKTON

Born Coceselo, Panama, 1936.
Educated University of California, Berkeley.
Resides Berkeley, California.

69. TWO GATER POT, 1968
Ceramic, 9x14x9.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc., New York.

CHRIS UNTERSEHER

Born Portland, Oregon, 1943.
B.A., San Francisco State College, 1965;
M.A., University of California, Davis, 1967.
Resides Reno, Nevada.

70. MONTE CARLO CUP, 1973
Porcelain
Lent by Helen Orutt Gallery, Philadelphia.
71. HOHOLY-NAGY CUP, 1973
Porcelain
Lent by Helen Orutt Gallery, Philadelphia.

PETER VANOEENBERGE

Born Boorburg, Holland, 1935.
B.S., Sacramento State College, 1959;
M.A., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1963.
Resides Sacramento, California.

72. AT HOME WATCHING SATURDAY NIGHT MOVIES, 1973
Stoneware, whiteware, underglazes, stains,
15x12x12.
Lent by The Museum of Mott Art, Inc., New York.
73. TUAN ATJAN IN HIS OUTDOOR BATH HOUSE, 1973
Stoneware, low fire clay, 8½x9½x9½.
Lent by The Museum of Mott Art, Inc., New York.

74. BIG MELON MAMAMILIA, 1973
Stoneware, low fire clay, glaze, underglazes,
10½x15x12½.
Lent by The Museum of Mott Art, Inc., New York.

PETER VOULKOS

Born Bozeman, Montana, 1924.
B.S., Montana State College, 1951; M.F.A., California
College of Arts and Crafts, 1952.
Teaches University of California, Berkeley.
Resides Berkeley, California.

75. REQ RIVER, 1960
Ceramic, glazes, 37x12½x14½.
Whitney Museum of American Art. Gift of
The Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc.
76. UNTITLED PLATE NO. 1, 1968
Stoneware, white porcelain.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc., New York.

PATTI WARASHINA

Born Spokane, Washington, 1940.
B.F.A., 1962; H.F.A., 1964, University of Washington.
Teaches University of Washington, Seattle.
Resides Seattle, Washington.

77. LOW FIRE KILN, 1972
Ceramic, 12x6½x10.
Lent by Lee Nordness Galleries, Inc., New York.

WILLIAM WILHELMI

Born Garwin, Iowa, 1939.
B.A., San Diego State College, 1960;
M.F.A., University of California, Los Angeles, 1969.
Resides Corpus Christi, Texas.

78. THE STARS AT NIGHT ARE BIG AND BRIGHT, 1973
Ceramic, 8x13x3.
Lent by the artist.
79. THE FLYING WALLENDOAS, 1973
Ceramic, 12x9x9.
Lent by Jennifer Merkle, Corpus Christi.
80. THE JUNE TAYLOR DANCERS, 1973
Ceramic, 3x13x13.
Lent by Ben Holland, Corpus Christi.

YIANNES

Born Greece, 1943.
Educated School of Grecian Glass Ceramics;
Umanitaria Art Institute, Milan, Italy.
Teaches Brooklyn College, New York.
Resides New York, New York.

81. THE GREAT FAKIR, 1971
Stoneware, nails, 15x5x5.
Lent by the artist.

RICK YOSHIMOTO

Born Honolulu, Hawaii, 1948.
B.A., California State University, Long Beach, 1974.
Resides Long Beach, California.

82. UNTITLED, 1973
Ceramic, 9x8x15½.
Lent by the artist.
83. UNTITLED PLATE, 1973
Ceramic, decals.
Lent by the artist.

CLAY

May 23 through July 4, 1974

This exhibition has been organized by Richard Marshall, a Helena Rubinstein Fellow in the Whitney Museum's Independent Study Program.

The Downtown Branch Museum is operated under the direction of David Hupert, Head of the Whitney Museum's Education Department. The staff consists of participants in the Whitney Museum's Independent Study Program earning advanced university credit while engaged in full-time research and museum work. The Helena Rubinstein Fellows are: Richard Armstrong, Lake Forest College; Nan Chisholm, Mills College; Brian Gross and Jane Kleinberg, Oberlin College; Richard Marshall, California State University, Long Beach; John Schoonmaker, University of Rochester; and William Zimmer, University of Texas. The administrative coordinator is Toba Tucker.

The Downtown Whitney, located in the Uris Building at 55 Water Street, is entirely supported by the business community of lower Manhattan. The museum is open 11-3 Monday through Friday, admission is free.

**WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
DOWNTOWN BRANCH
55 Water Street
New York, New York 10041**